

Message Text

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SUBJ: NIMEIRI'S "FACE THE NATION" SPEECH

1. IN MONTHLY QUOTE FACE THE NATION UNQUOTE SPEECH, PRESIDENT NIMEIRI COMMENTED NOV. 11 ON JUBA INCIDENTS (KHARTOUM 2386), CALLING THEM, DESPITE THEIR GRAVITY, A QUOTE POSITIVE SIGN UNQUOTE BECAUSE DEMONSTRATORS' ABILITY TO REACH PEOPLE WAS BASED SOLELY ON THE PEOPLE'S LACK OF INFORMATION. EVENTS HAD SHOWN BASIC STRENGTH OF SYSTEM OF SOUTHERN AUTONOMY, ALTHOUGH MUCH PATIENCE AND HARD WORK STILL NEEDED TO MAKE IT VIABLE. ON OTHER HAND, MEDIA SHOULD HAVE DONE MORE THOROUGH JOB OF INFORMING NATION ON PROJECT, COVERING BOTH NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE ASPECTS AND THEREBY GIVING THE LIE TO OPPOSITIONIST CLAIMS.

2. PRESIDENT RIDICULED UNNAMED PERSON (N.B. - PROBABLY SADIQ EL-MAHDI) FOR HIS ALLEGEDLY HAVING SCHEMED AGAINST GOS FROM ABROAD AND ALLIED HIMSELF WITH COMMUNISTS.

3. PRESIDENT DEFENDED HIS REVELATION OF 1973 COUP ATTEMPT (KHARTOUM 2339), NOW DATED IN JULY 1973. HE SAID INVESTIGATION IS NOW COMPLETE AND THE TRIAL HAS BEGUN. QUOTE NATIONAL FRONT UNQUOTE (VAGUE TERM PERENNIALY GIVEN TO OPPOSITION FORCES WHOSE MAKE-UP MIGHT VARY

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FROM TIME TO TIME) EXPLOITED CERTAIN OFFICERS AND NCOS,

PLAYING ON THEIR RACIALIST (E.E. REGIONALIST) TENDENCIES. FOLLOWING OFFICERS WERE ARRESTED: MOHAMMED NUR SAAD (BRIGADIER IN CHARGE OF ORDANCE), FADL ABDALLAH, BUSHRA ABDALLAH, AND DIFAN KUKU. TRIAL, HE SAID, WOULD REVEAL ALL WERE VICTIMS OF NATIONAL FRONT, WHICH WOULD STOP AT NOTHING TO ACHIEVE GOALS.

4. PRESIDENT RECITED RUMORS ABOUT ALLEGED STONING OF NIMEIRI/NYERERE PARTY IN JUBA, ALLEGED COUP RELATED TO RETIREMENT OF AWAD KHALAFALLA (KHARTOUM 2509) AND INCIDENT IN WHICH FIVE PERSONS WERE KILLED (KHARTOUM 2508). HE CRITICIZED MEDIA FOR NOT HAVING PUBLISHED INFO ON TIMELY BASIS SO THAT FACTS COULD QUIET RUMORS.

5. PRESIDENT ALSO REVEALED TERMS OF OIL EXPLORATION AGREEMENT WITH CHEVRON (KHARTOUM 2361): CHEVRON WILL BEAR ALL COSTS OF EXPLORATION, WHICH IS TO BE COMPLETED WITHIN TWO YEARS. IF OIL IS FOUND, GOS WILL RECEIVE AS TAXES 12.5 PERCENT OF GROSS VALUE PLUS 50 PERCENT OF NET PROFITS. PRESIDENT CAUTIONED AGAINST EXCESSIVE OPTIMISM ABOUT RESULTS OF EXPLORATION AND SAID SUDAN'S MAIN POTENTIAL WOULD CONTINUE TO BE IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT.

6. COMMENT: AS ON SIMILAR OCCASIONS IN PAST, SPEECH SEEKS TO GIVE IMPRESSION OF OPENNESS AND QUOTE PARTICIPATORY DEMOCRACY UNQUOTE BELIED BY GOS ACTION (KHARTOUM A-93, DATED OCT. 11, 1974). BY CRITICIZING PRESS FOR TIMID REPORTING AND BY OPENLY DISCUSSING RUMORS, NIMEIRI SEEKING GIVE IMPRESSION OF PERSONAL SELF-CONFIDENCE AND STRENGTH. HOWEVER, NEW MEASURES HAVE EFFECT OF TIGHTENING SSU (AND THUS NIMEIRI) CONTROL OVER PRESS. WE CONCLUDE PRESIDENT STILL HOPES HE CAN CREATE ATMOSPHERE OF CREDIBILITY AND DISPEL THE NOTION THAT RECENT EVENTS AMOUNT TO SIGNIFICANT OPPOSITION SENTIMENT BUT IS TAKING NO CHANCES.
BREWER

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